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Youth Issue

MARCH 1998
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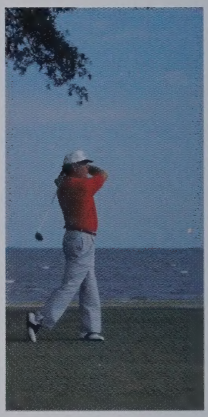
Arissa Madden

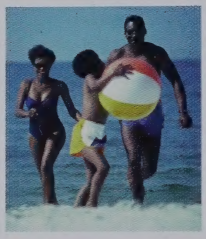
Mississippi's Boys and Girls Club 1998 Youth of the Year

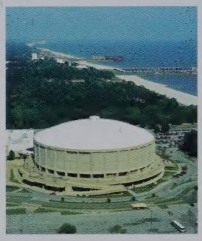
Winning Essays

Young People Discuss Their Favorite Music Artists

Harrison County







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Harrison County Board of Supervisors, left to right: Standing: John McAdams, Chancery Clerk; Larry Benefield, President, District 2; Robin Alfred Midcalf, Esq., District 4; Joseph R. Meadows, Board Attorney; Seated: C. T. Switzer, Jr., Vice President, District 5; Bobby Eleuterius, District 1; David V. LaRosa, Sr. District 3.

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MISSISSIPPI Star

VOL.2 NO. 7 MARCH 1998

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Arissa Madden

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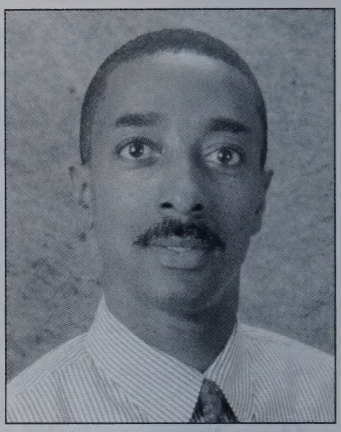


Maurice E. Singleton, Jr.

Welcome to the second Youth Issue of Mississippi Star. This issue is special to me for several reasons. First of all, one of the reasons I started Mississippi Star was to provide positive reflection to young people, to show them real life people overcoming obstacles and doing remarkable things.

Secondly, this issue is special because we focus primarily on youth. In this issue, we have the winning essays, discussions of favorite types of music and musical artists of young people, a short feature on a dynamic young lady as well as profiles of outstanding high school students.

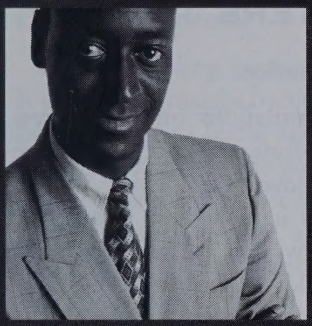
The book section this month includes summaries of recommended reading for young people. Biographies of Thurgood Marshall, Frederick Douglass and Ralph Ellison as well as the colorful short novel, Sweet Clara and the Freedom Quilt by Deborah Hopkinson with beautiful illustrations by James Ransome are enlightening reading for young people.

Young people can't get enough of positive example and reflection. For every positive message they encounter that encourages them to reach for the stars, they receive countless negative messages that encourage self-doubt and hopelessness.

Certainly, our examples and lessons as parents to our children are going to have the greatest impact on the lives of our children. The roles of teachers, clergy, scoutmasters and coaches are also very influential.

I don't believe children can hear the expression, "good job" too many times from enough people. As a youth basketball coach, I have seen that dejected look on a child's face as he struggled at trying to make a layup or a free throw or tried to overcome traveling. I have also seen that smile that comes with confidence as he finally developed a rotation on his free throw shot and the nets begin to make that "swish" sound.

With practice, a little direction and constant encouragement, children begin to expect the best of themselves. They begin to embrace situations where there is an expectation for them to succeed. And they succeed! MS



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LETTERS

Dear Maurice,

Congratulations on the success of the *Mississippi Star.* We have really enjoyed each issue; we are just sorry it took us so long to let you know this in writing. We would like to make a couple of quick comments on articles in the December issue.

The first article, "Flashing Light: by Robin Alfred Midcalf, puts into words the feelings of letting go of the child that has been with you for at least 18 years. Although we have not had this experience, we not only got an idea how it would feel but the realization that it will happen, we saw the flashing light after reading this article. We just feel fortunate to be a part of these early years in our son's life. Our black fathers must realize that their children need them in their lives and they need their children.

The second article, "Do You Need a Computer?" by George W. Allen Jr., was very informative. Instead of designer clothes and Segas, an investment in a PC would be great for any child. Technology is changing very fast and knowledge about the operation of a PC is presently a necessity.

Thanks again to you and your staff for providing the community with such a quality magazine.

Benjamin and Lajoie R. Butler
Bay St. Louis, MS

Dear Mr. Singleton,

I enjoy reading your magazine. It gives us an insight on things that happen close to home and around the state. Keep up the good work.

And now a few words about this heart wrenching story about the plight of Mr. Dahmer and his family. In my opinion this man was truly committed, with great courage and no compromise. I will always remember the Dahmer family when I think of the Kings, Evers and Rosa Parks.

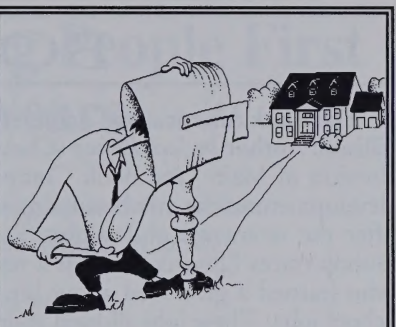
Mrs. Leona L. Williams
Bay St. Louis, MS

Tell Us What You Think About

MISSISSIPPI *Star*

Express your point of view in a letter.

Did you miss out on any prior issues of *Mississippi Star,* and you want to keep up with what's going on in South Mississippi? Drop us a line indicating the name and address of the person(s) to whom you would like us to mail a copy of *Mississippi Star. Please include a check or money order totaling $3.00 for each copy.*



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Please Drop Us A Line With Your New Address So You Can Be Sure To Receive Your Mississippi Star!

Letters to the Publisher

should be 100 words or less.

Star Calendar: Events of interest to South Mississippians should be submitted on your organization's letterhead, specifying the date, time, place of event and a number of contact. Submissions should be received by the twentieth day of the preceding month.

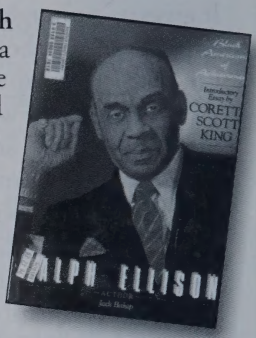
Be sure to include a daytime telephone number.

Mail submissions to

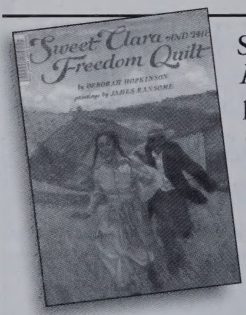
Mississippi Star, P.O. Box 2651, Bay St. Louis, MS 39521.

Mississippi Star reserves the right to refuse or decline to publish any submission.

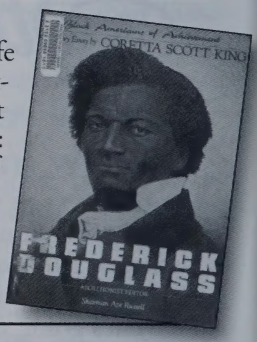
BOOKS



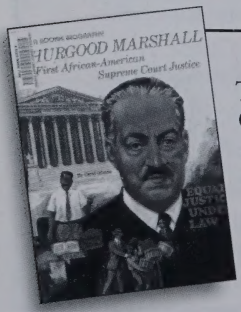
The Black Americans of Achievement Biography, Ralph Ellison: Author *by Jack Bishop* (Chelsea House Publishers, a division of Main Line Book Company 1988) follows the development of the award-winning writer who was named after the renowned philosopher Ralph Waldo Emerson. Bishop traces Ellison's tracks as a resourceful young man, who learned a great deal about life while working after-school jobs. These jobs allowed young Ellison the opportunity to meet several influential people, including J.D. Randolph, a janitor at the Oklahoma State Law Library. Bishop traces the travels of Ellison through the Harlem Renaissance and through the writing of the novel Invisible Man which is his most famous work.



Sweet Clara and the Freedom Quilt *(Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., New York 1993)* is a wonderful story about the power of the human spirit and a quest for freedom when slavery was a way of life. Colorful paintings by James Ransome illustrate author Deborah Hopkinson's novel for young readers that show the resourcefulness of a desperate people who succeed at escaping from slavery through a collection of information compiled in a quilt. Highly recommended for young readers!



Frederick Douglass: Abolitionist Editor chronicles the life of the man who escaped slavery at the age of twenty, educated himself and moved to prominence in the abolitionist movement during the mid-1800's. Frederick Douglass: Abolitionist Editor (Chelsea House Publishers, a division of Main Line Book Company 1988) is one of a series of fifty books in the Black Americans of Achievement Series. An essay by Coretta Scott King introduces each book.



Thurgood Marshall: First African-American Supreme Court Justice teaches young readers about the career accomplishments of the legendary attorney who fought injustice in the courts. With photographs and graphic illustrations author Carol Greene provides a perspective of the time and circumstances of Marshall's achievements.

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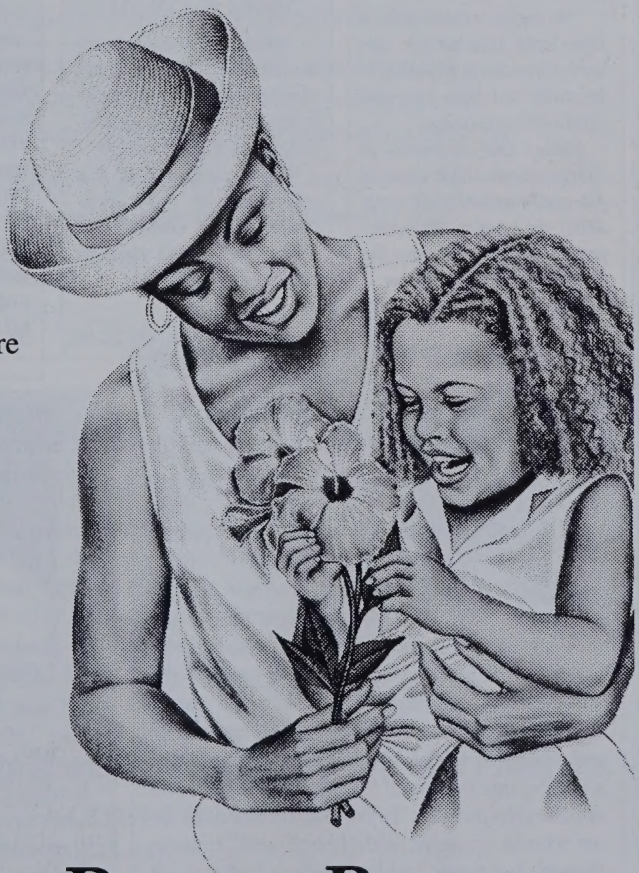

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OPINION POLL

Young People Talk About their Favorite Musical Artists, Styles of Music and What They Like About Their Music.

Maria J. Ashby

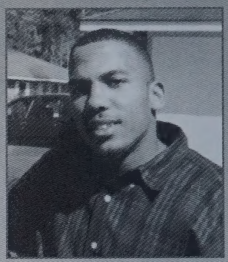
"My favorite musical artist is Eryka Badu. I like her style. She sends a message to all women to be strong and keep your eyes open to all opportunities."

Maria J. Ashby is a senior at Harrison Central High School. A four year member of the Army ROTC, she plans to study computer technology at the University of South Alabama.

Maurice Singleton, III

"Rakim would have to be my favorite artist. He represents what hip hop is all about, creativity and skills. His beats are original, and his lyrics have depth."

Maurice Singleton, III is a sophomore at Pearl River Community College in Poplarville. He is studying computer science.



Derrick Saucier

"Master P. is my favorite rap artist. Some of his lyrics influence teenagers to free themselves from gang-related environments. He also supports the schooling of teenagers, encouraging them to go to college so they will not have to struggle the way he did."

Derrick Saucier is a physical therapy major at Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College Jeff Davis Campus.

Emleigh M. Jacobs

"Eryka Badu is the first person that comes to mind when asked, 'What is my favorite style of music?' Badu brings in a new style of music that settles the soul and sets the mind for some inspirational learning. When Eryka Badu first entered the scene with the hit single On and On, she caught my interest with her new style, lyrics, appearance and approach to the music industry. She flows with the inner spiritual knowledge of the world which surrounds her. Eryka Badu is one deep sister who is at peace with herself and it shows through her music and knowledge of what she is singing."

Emleigh M. Jacobs is a sophomore Sociology/ Social Work major at Tougaloo College.

Lonnie Bradley

Tupak Shakur is my favorite artist. His lyrics and the meanings behind his songs are some of the things that encourage me to better myself. His lyrics relate to all types of young people. We all miss him."

Lonnie Bradley is a freshman math major at Mississippi Valley State University in Itta Bena.

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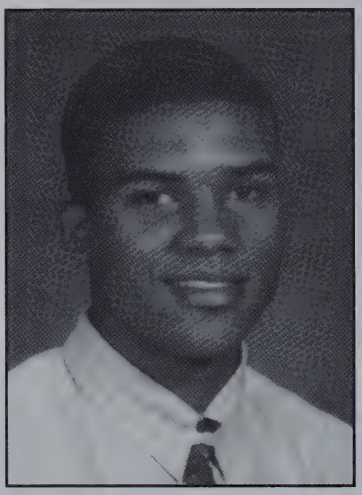
Why I Am Proud of My Generation and of What We Can Accomplish

BY HONORE HAZEUR



My generation is living the dream - the dream that the great Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. had many years ago. His dream was that people would be judged on the content of their character and not on the color of their skin. We are the generation that has and continues to knock down barriers, dispel myths, and eradicate stereotypes and racism. We are proving everyday that we are proud, hard-working, capable human beings who want to live the American dream.

My generation is taking advantage of the many opportunities available to us, made possible by the struggles and sometimes lives of our ancestors. I am proud to be a part of this generation that is so concerned and involved in saving the environment and recycling. We feel that this beautiful land, we call America should be preserved so that our children and our children's children will be able to enjoy it's vast riches.

My generation has been instrumental in the new technology age. We have changed the way people communicate and do business. With the use of beepers, cellular phones, car phones, fax service, electronic filing, toll-free numbers, and the internet, there's no faster or easier way to communicate or do business. We have set our sights and our goals on the future generation. The year 2000 and beyond will know no limits because our generation has not placed any limits on ourselves. We have strived to make our mark, to reach for the sky and be the best we can be. We have ensured that future generations will continue to thrive and accomplish great things.

Honore Hazeur is a senior at St. Stanislaus College Prep in Bay St. Louis.

Why I Am Proud of My Generation and of What We Can Accomplish

BY JENNIFER BEAL

I am proud of my generation because we are very goal oriented. As I look among my peers, a good may of them set goals for themselves and plan to accomplish them. We also realize that to accomplish our goals it is going to take more than wishing; it is going to take discipline, education, dedication, and a lot of hard work. We know that we have the potential for very bright futures if we dedicate ourselves while we are young. Our goals will become realities if we continue believing in ourselves and using the vast resources that are available to us.

My generation is the generation born in the age of computer technology and the true beneficiaries of the information age. Whereas when my mother was growing up, people were just beginning to get black and white television sets in their homes; today many homes have a color television in two or three rooms. From the time my generation was born, many of our toys and games used some form of a computer, whether it was a Nintendo, a walky talky, or a calculator.

Learning about computer technology is a part of our basic education in school today. By gaining knowledge of this technology in everything we do, as well in the classroom, my generation is well prepared to best use this technology. With our knowledge and this technology, we will be ale to accomplish a great many things to address the concerns of the world, and strive to make the world a better place for future generations.

Jennifer Beal is a junior at Bishop Dunne High School in Duncanville, Texas.

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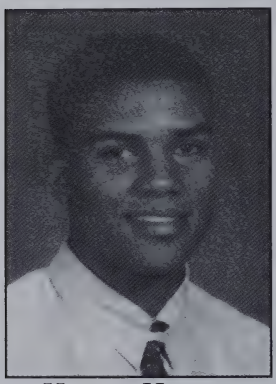

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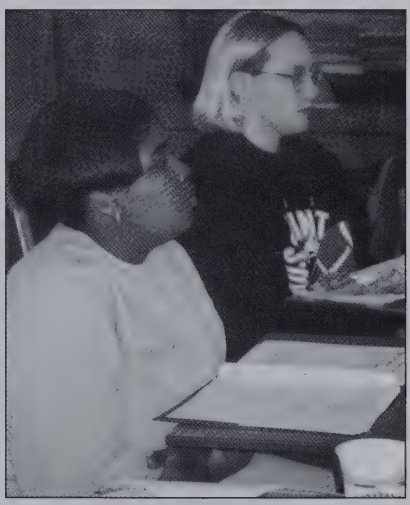
Teens Serve as Peer Mediators

by Jeanie Lunsford

Moss Point High School is forming a Peer Mediation Team made up of students interested in helping others resolve personal conflicts. According to team sponsor Evelyn Millender, developing a sense of personal responsibility is a key part of education and one of the district's strategic goals. Efforts like peer mediation fit right into that plan.

The volunteers say that conflict often stems from a breakdown in communication. Team member Jamie Devera says a conflict can begin with a half-understood comment. "A group of friends get together, something is said. It could even be a joke," said Jamie. "But they hear about it later and get mad."

To help their classmates handle communication breakdowns - before they become discipline problems - almost a dozen students are giving up their spare time to learn how to mediate. Millender says she wanted to start with a small core group that could eventually go out and teach



Monica Tucker (left) and Andrea Bolton learn listening, facilitating and counseling skills during training to become peer mediators. A group of Moss Point High School students are donating their time to work with classmates that need help resolving conflicts. Sponsor Evelyn Millender says that students are effective mediators because they can empathize with the special problems teens face and offer workable solutions. The training emphasizes the need for confidentiality and an impartial viewpoint. Student mediators also learn leadership skills and experience being of service to others.

these techniques to younger students.

The mediation team is learning listening, facilitating and advisory techniques. "They'll work in a controlled environment, with adults within consulting distance," said Millender.

Although adults will always be available in case the teen counselor needs assistance, Millender believes students can be more effective mediators than their adult counterparts because of a shared perspective. Students can empathize with the special problems teens face and offer workable solutions.

The training emphasizes the need for confidentiality and an impartial viewpoint. The students will work in pairs to ensure maximum effectiveness. And if a mediator has a close relationship with someone needing help, he or she can request another mediator take the case.

Dr. Jane McCoy, director of vocational education for Moss Point Schools, likes the program because of its 'real-life' applications. "Students that mediate are taught skills beyond the mediation aspect," said McCoy. "They learn leadership skills and experience a feeling of service to others. Many times they take it into their homes and workplaces."

The peer mediation program is funded through a grant from Learn and Serve America. MS

Jeanie Lunsford is the Communications Director for Moss Point Schools.

Bay High Girls Claim Victory

Members of the Bay High Girls Basketball team in a victory pose after capturing South State Championship.

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What should I do?

Perform monthly self-examinations, and make sure your doctor gives you a breast examination once a year. Mammography can detect breast cancer up to two years before you or your doctor can feel a lump. So, once you turn 40, have a mammogram every year.

For more information or a physician referral call:

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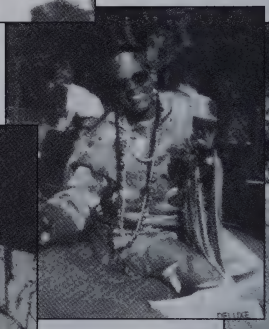

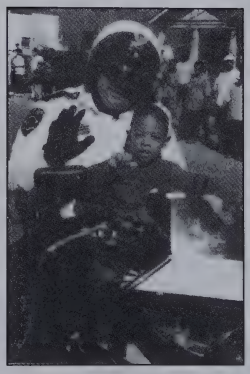

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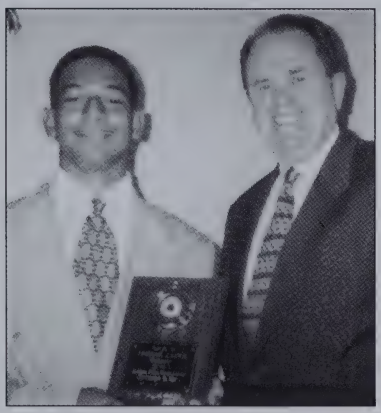
YOUNG PEOPLE ON THE MOVE

FREDRIC J. LEWIS



Frederic J. Lewis is the 1997-98 recipient of the Jerome Reso Scholarship. The Jerome Reso Scholarship is given annually by the New Orleans Province of the Brothers of the Sacred Heart in a spirit of gratitude for the professional support and the personal commitment of Jerome J. Reso, Jr. to perpetuating the educational mission of the Brothers of the Sacred Heart.

A senior, Lewis has participated in football, basketball, track and baseball during his years at St. Stanislaus. He was named "Pepsi Student of the Month" during each year since seventh grade, and he has been nominated for "Who's Who Among American High School Students."

Frederic plans to begin his college studies in the Fall at one of the State's public universities. Frederic is the son of Mrs. Yolanda Lewis of Bay St. Louis.

MARIA J. ASHBY

Maria J. Ashby is the Battalion Commander of the Jr. Army ROTC program at Harrison Central High School in Lyman. Maria is drill team commander and responsible for after school training and maintenance of cadet records.

She has a scholastic average of 92 and ranks 85 out of approximately 400 seniors in this spring's graduating class.

Maria plans to attend the University of South Alabama in the Fall to begin studies towards a degree in computer engineering. Maria is the daughter of Cheryl Ashby.

Mississippi's 1998 Boys and Girls Club Youth of the Year

by Maurice E. Singleton, Jr.

This Fall, Arissa Madden will begin her college studies at the United States Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs. However, before she travels to Colorado, the Biloxi High School senior has at least two other trips to take in other parts of the United States before September.

Arissa Madden

As the Boys and Girls Club Youth of the Year for the State of Mississippi, Arissa will be competing in the regional competition in Atlanta in April. Then, sometime in May or early June, she will join the other state winners from across the Country in Chicago as guests on the Oprah Winfrey Show.

"I think I did okay," Arissa answered her friends and other participants following her interview with eight judges at the State competition in Tupelo in January.

"I was excited because I knew I was going to be on the Oprah Winfrey Show," Arissa said was her reaction when she was named Boys and Girls Club Youth of the Year for the State. "I didn't put on a show or anything like that; I just answered the questions."

Each state winner will receive an all-expense paid week-long trip to Chicago in addition to a considerable scholarship funded by the Oprah Winfrey Angel Network.

A long-term member of The Boys and Girls Club, Arissa said she understood that the interview accounted for half of the competition while participation and involvement in the local club accounted for the other half of the judging.

"I have been a member for ten years," she explained. "I have been a junior leader for four years. As a junior leader, you help organize service projects, chaperone field trips for the younger kids, emcee banquets and a lot of other things.

"Whenever I set out to do something, I don't necessarily expect a reward for it," she added. "I just go out and do my best."

Arissa's best just happens to be outstanding. Of the three hundred twenty-five seniors slated for graduation at Biloxi High School this spring, Arissa is currently ranked seven. She has a grade point of 3.98 while maintaining a very active extra-curricular activity schedule.

Arissa is the Cadet Colonel of the Air Force Junior ROTC at Biloxi High School. She is student body president, president of Future Business Leaders of America and co-captain of the school's dance team.

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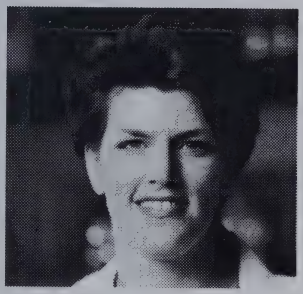

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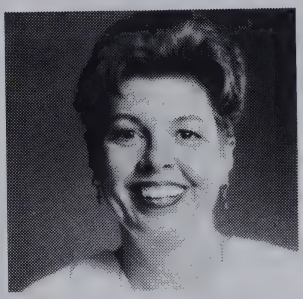

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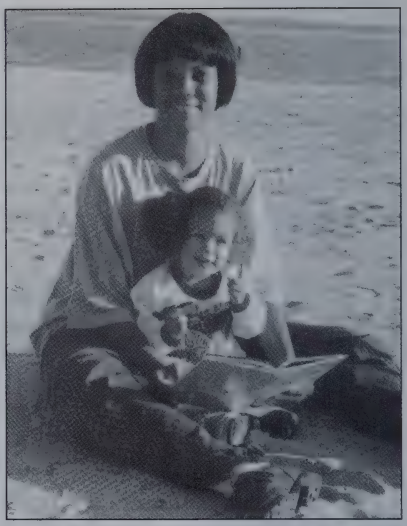

Arissa prepares baby sister to follow in her footsteps by reading Tiphani's favorite book to her Dr. Seuss' The Foot Book.

She also maintains a very active schedule in her home as she helps her Mother with her three siblings. "Mom works two jobs; she's a full-time substitute teacher and works nights as a switchboard operator.

"Good time management is the way I maintain my GPA," she explains. "I study from eleven (p.m.) until about 1:30 (a.m.), and then I get up at 5:45 and wake everybody up for school. When Mama gets home all she has to do is dress Tiphani (one-year-old sister).

Those time management skills should come in handy as Arissa pursues a degree in computer science at the Air Force Academy. "I want to be a computer programmer. It seems that every time you look around there is new software, new computer programs. The internet is everywhere. I like that job security," she said.

Where does Arissa get her drive and

Arissa is co-captain of the Biloxi High School dance team.

ambition?

"My Mom motivates me a lot," she explained. "She told me ever since I entered first grade that I could accomplish anything I want. She has always told me to do the very best I can. She has been the main person to influence and inspire me."

How is Arissa preparing for life at the Air Force Academy?

"I went there in the summer. The altitude is high, so I have been working on my breathing. It is going to be a big change. Colorado Springs is right next to Denver. I am going to be a country girl in this big place. I think that I'm going to do well. I'll have to get used to the cold weather."

What advice would she give to young people?

"It's easy to find excuses not to do something. People need to take responsibility for their lives. They shouldn't just float around like a leaf in the wind. You need to become a leader and start planning for your future now." MS

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Denise Dedeaux, Chairperson of the 19th Annual Black History Program and Ms. Oseola McCarty.

Guest speaker, Dr. Charles Beady, Jr. President of Piney Woods Country Life School.

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Mrs. Jewel Tucker and Ms. Oseola McCarty.

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BRIEFS

Ed Mayo Junior High students in Lori Lambert's class (pictured from left), Tiffany Price, Andrew Smoke, John Byrd and Tina Jones are all part of an innovative language arts program based on the Carbo Reading Method.

The program, designed by well-known educator Marie Carbo, involves multiple senses and takes advantage of students' varying learning styles. Students read along while listening to books recorded by the teacher. They then discuss the content one-on-one. They can choose to sit on couches, at desks or in bean bag chairs - depending on their preference. According to Lambert, making students comfortable while reading in school helps encourage them to read for pleasure at home.

Lambert encourages students to choose their own library books, then does the taping herself with the help of an aide. For students that have previously had difficulty reading at grade level, this method can make a dramatic difference. Lambert has had so much success with this method, Carbo recently invited her to describe her experiences at a statewide conference on reading.

Volunteers are needed to record books. Anyone who is interested in helping with this may call Ed Mayo Junior High at 475-0367.

TIGER BAND HAS A FULL AGENDA

Joe Thompson is an 11th-grade tuba player. He is one of the many students who play an instrument in the Moss Point High School Tiger Band. The band is one of the primary attractions at all of the MPHS football games. Football season is over now, but the band isn't just sitting around waiting for next year.

The Tiger Band is currently preparing for a regionwide competition on April 3 that will involve high school bands from across the South. Their final Spring event is the state band festival on April 24.

During the month of February the Tiger Band marched in Mardi Gras parades in Mandeville and Metairie, Louisiana.

BRIEFS

History was made on Saturday, January 24, 1998, in Jackson, Mississippi, when ten young ladies became charter members of the Junior Daughter division of Knights of Peter Claver Ladies Auxiliary, Father Anthony Bourges Court #171.

The initiation ceremony was conducted by the Area Counselor, Lady Rhonda Labat, along with 15 Junior Daughters from Court #6 in Bay St. Louis. Other ladies in attendance from Court #6 were: Grand Lady Marilyn Smith, Lady Golden Fairconnetue, Jr. Daughter Counselor, Lady Paula Dedeaux, Assistant Jr. Daughter Counselor and Lady Marion Labat.

The Knights of Peter Claver Ladies Auxiliary established the Junior Branch in 1930 to insure the longevity of the organization. The Junior Division emphasizes the virtues of Obedience, Trustworthiness and Loyalty. The Division strives to build good character and leadership qualities and to meet the interests and needs of the members.

Lady Kathy Harris is the Junior Daughter Counselor; Lady Angela Barial is the Assistant Junior Counselor; Lady Donna Williams is the Grand Lady of the Senior Court.

Charter members of the Junior Daughter division of Knights of Peter Claver Ladies Auxiliary Court #171: (Front row from left) Curtisha Burk, Shamira Ervin, Sheena White and Jerica Gray. (Standing from left) Talmechia Cable, Marcella Harris, Markeshia Harris, Angel Longino, Stephanie McKinnon and Alicia Lynn.

In addition to the qualities established for the Junior Branch, Senior Court #171 has established a rites of passage program for the young ladies so that they will be poised to keep the Knights of Peter Claver Ladies Auxiliary moving and shaking well into the 21st century.

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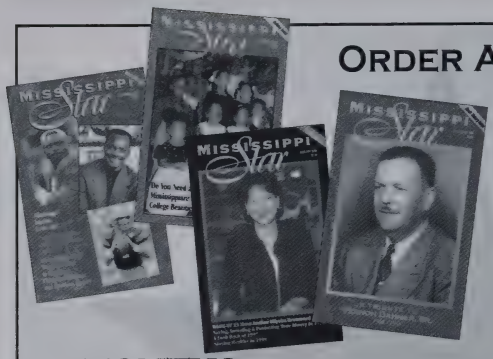

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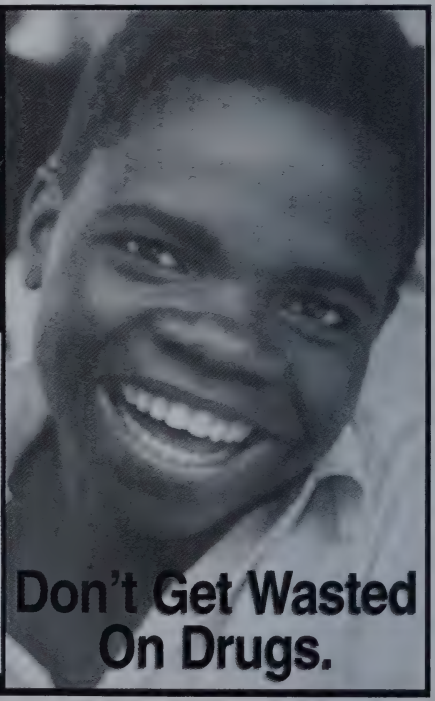

Don't Get Wasted On Drugs.

THE POWER OF WORDS

by Stacy James Mackey

My husband and I were talking recently after we had just laid our little boy down to sleep for the night. We began to reminisce on some of the things we remember our parents saying to us when were young, such as:

"Times are so hard, you'll probably never own a home."

"You'll never amount to anything with grades like these."

"You're Black and you're a woman; you have two strikes against you."

And my favorite was,

"You'll always have to work twice as hard, just to be considered equal."

I believe that when my parents said some of those things they probably weren't trying to defeat my spirit rather I believe that they were honestly trying to prepare me for some of the harsh realities of life. Our parents grew up in the era preceding the civil rights struggles. I imagine them feeling frustrated with dim hopes of true equality for the world their children were to grow up in.

Naturally, I was too young to understand their perspective. What my parents subliminally instilled in me were memorized negative thoughts that have stuck with me through adulthood. Whenever life did get tough, those voices would ring through my head reminding me that my dreams really weren't attainable. "I wasn't good enough" was reinforced in me.

As my husband and I stood over our sleeping son counting our blessings, we made a vow to fill his mind everyday with positive aspirations. I'm not saying that we'll never warn him about life's hard truths, but we will tell him that despite any economical, political or social climate the world may be in that God has still filled his life with wonderful choices and he'll have his pick. We will embed him everyday in the famous words of Rev. Jesse Jackson, "I AM SOMEBODY!" I wished my parents had sewn that message into my young mind.

As I watched the Olympics and admired the talent of so many young people, I found myself wondering what were some of the comments those athletes' parents told them as they endured tireless years of training. "You can do it!" "The gold is not out of your reach!" "I knew you could do it!"

The power of words does indeed have an amazing effect on our lives, especially our children's. Take time to empower your kids with wonderful words. It could make a lifetime of difference.

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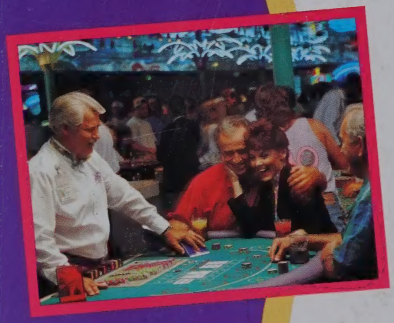

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